

May 15, 1964

**Record of the Conversation from Chairman Mao's
Audience with the Albanian Women's Delegation
and Albanian Film Workers**

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Summary:

Mao and Vito Kapo discuss Sino-Albanian relations in the context of the anti-revisionist struggle against the Soviet Union.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Record of the Conversation from Chairman Mao's Audience with the Albanian Women's Delegation and Albanian Film Workers
(Awaiting Chairman's Review)

Time: 5pm, May 15th 1964

Location: Great Hall of the People

Accompanied by: Kang Keqing, Luo Qiong, Chen Huangmei

Present: Qi Yun

Translator: Xiong Yuanjie

Notes by: Qi Yun

Vito Kapo (hereafter shorten to Vito): I'm very pleased to have been received by the Chairman, it is a great honor for not only ourselves, but also for all Albanian women.

Chairman [Mao Zedong]: When did you arrive?

Vito: The 27th of April [1964].

Chairman: When did the ambassador arrive? His face is familiar.

Ambassador [Nesti Nase, Albanian ambassador to the PRC]: Ten years ago, when you became the Chairman of the People's Republic of China, I presented my credentials to you.

Chairman: This is the second time that you've come, welcome. What do they do (pointing to the Albanian film crew)?

Vito: They are film workers.

Chairman: Our two countries are coming together. Our two parties are coming together. Many Marxist-Leninist parties (not those in name only, but the true [Marxist-Leninists]; the so-called "dogmatists" according to the revisionists) are coming together. We are criticized, they say that we are dogmatists, and as long as people criticize us then that is good.

Vito: When the enemy curses and criticizes us, only then do we feel comfortable.

Chairman: It's only when people aren't criticizing us that there's cause for concern. There are so many things that other people don't understand, if they're going to criticize then let them, right now we must argue, we must have public debate, many people have started to pay attention to Marx, Engels, Lenin, and even Stalin's great works. They've started to investigate who is right and who is wrong. Is revisionism correct or is "dogmatism"? Both of our countries have been labeled dogmatists and endured a lot of criticism: false revolutionaries, new Trotskyites, nationalists, splittists..., we wear many hats.

Vito: They have no other recourse besides insolent slander.

Chairman: But they do not dare to publish our articles in their journal [sic; specific journal undefined, but likely Pravda]. They say that they have their reasons, but they don't dare publish our articles in their journal. We must compete with them: we say, how about we'll publish some of yours, you publish some of ours, but they won't do it.

Vito: They are unreasonable.

Chairman: Precisely. They are unreasonable and so they won't do it. They say we are unreasonable. They say we are "dogmatists," "Trotskyists," "petty bourgeois socialists," then go ahead and publish our stuff! After you publish it, you can go line by line and refute it. But they still don't dare, they are cowards, it makes sense to call them paper tigers.

Vito: Yes, yes, yes.

Chairman: Imperialism is a paper tiger, so is revisionism.

Vito: Revisionism is their accomplice.

Chairman: The Chinese people welcome you.

Vito: Everywhere that we go we have received a warm welcome. Every time we arrive somewhere, the welcomes become demonstrations of warmth and friendship, and when we say goodbye everyone has tears in their eyes. This makes us feel like we are not a small country and a small Party, but that we are one and the same as the People's Republic of China. This is the result of the work carried out by your Party.

Chairman: You've held your ground, the fact that you have not yet been suppressed is itself a great victory. Albania is encircled by enemies on all sides and they still can't contain you. They have proposed ending public debate no matter what, do you all agree?

Vito and the Ambassador: We've never agreed.

Chairman: They want to stop [public debate], they will raise the issue [of stopping public debate] even if it only lasts three months.

Vito: Khrushchev is trying to buy time.

Chairman: They went through Romania to raise the issue of stopping public debate with us. (At this point, a reporter for the Tuanjie Newspaper entered, the Chairman stood up and said: "Welcome, you are all young people.") We will tell them: as soon as they make a move, we will publish an article. Our article has yet to be finished, so we have instead published articles from other supportive parties. We have not finished our criticism of their public letter, we have only written eight articles, and we still need a few more before our criticism is complete. Now they have published new ones, we will need even more time. They want to hold a meeting in May with the Chinese and Russian Parties. I'm sorry, I think it should be around May next year, more or less. They say that they want to adopt "collective measures," and so we say, why don't you let us take a look at those "collective measures."

Vito: They will continue to carry on like this.

Chairman: Even if they may carry out whatever these "collective measures" are, we are prepared. Whatever the measures, go right ahead!

Vito: China is a giant, in the northeast we saw many things!

Chairman: China is a backwards country, in the beginning we had a little bit of industry, industry in the northeast was relatively developed; [we have] started to accumulate some experience in agricultural industry, and after a few more five year plans it should improve again. The more we that we organize ourselves, the more that we may improve somewhat.

(asking Comrade Chen Huangmei) Who are you, comrade?

Chen: Chen Huangmei.

Chairman: You're engaged in the arts now, have you been to Yan'an?

Chen: Yes, I have met the Chairman a few times. Now I work as a film worker.

Chairman: Film, theater, literature, it's no good if they don't reflect the modern workers and peasants. Our society still has some ideological dogmas that are yet to be improved, right now we are in the process of doing this work. (Asking Chen): When did you join the Party?

Chen: 1932, in Shanghai.

Chairman: That was the era of land reform, the Long March was 1934. Some of us sitting here today are engaged in ideological work.

Vito: Qibrije Ciu is the Vice Minister for the [Albanian] Ministry of Culture.

Chen: We also have a composer, a director, and a camera man.

Chairman: All of you are doing ideological work.

Vito: Mass organizations also do ideological work, they are also implementing the Party line.

Chairman: Our Party is the workers and peasants' Party, political power is the workers' and peasants' power, the army is the workers' and peasants' army, ideology is one part of the superstructure, and it should reflect the workers and peasants. Old ideologies can become stagnated, old things cannot be driven out, they are not willing to yield, even in death. We must find a way to drive them out, but we cannot be too violent, if we are too violent then people will be uneasy. We must use a careful approach, to overcome the old, that which is old still has its markets. What is most important thing is that we must use new things to replace the old. Your proposal cannot be realized all of a sudden, it is not that kind of affair, it's a case of you promote yours and he promotes his. We've raised the issue of making literature and art serve the people for several decades, but some of our workers and comrades support them only with their words, while in reality they oppose them. Are things any better now?

Chen: Much better.

Chairman: And this also includes some party members, and individuals outside the party, they're fond of those dead people [writers and artists], and if it's not those dead people it's foreigners, or dead foreigners, foreigners reflect the thoughts of dead people, they don't reflect the living. Your country probably also has these problems?

Vito: We do. They are remnants of the past, and there are also foreign influences.

Chairman: They are stubborn.

Vito: Especially women.

Chairman: Women should be divided into youths, old, middle-aged, and superstitious old women, because they have suffered a lifetime of bitterness they place their hopes in spirits. The next generations are better than they are. You should look around the Lingyin Temple [Temple of the Soul's Retreat] in Hangzhou, every day there are people who go there to burn incense, there are old men and old women, accompanied by their sons, daughters, and grandchildren. They go in earnest to burn incense, but their children, grandsons, and granddaughters go to play, they don't burn incense in earnest, they're there to stroll around Hangzhou.

The situation also depends on the conditions. In Wuhan, Shanghai, Hangzhou you can see the dockhands working on the wooden boats and ferries don't believe in spirits, in the Old Society ferry workers never believed in spirits, the boat workers still did though and they venerated the Dragon King because they didn't have any guarantees, if they faced heavy storms then their boats could capsize. Women giving birth to children is also just like this, in hospitals there are guarantees, so women don't believe in spirits. Without hospitals, there are no assurances, so they have to believe in spirits. (Asking Comrade Kang Keqing) Have also noticed this? If there were no doctors, teaching them [women] not to be superstitions, it wouldn't work out.

Vito: Without scientific knowledge, we are unable to eliminate superstition, because of this we must cultivate cadres and gradually extinguish superstition. What is really terrible is how capitalism and revisionism influence us through television, music, and literature.

Chairman: We must gradually increase our resistance to this kind of influence. Our countries can refuse to import revisionist or capitalist works of art and literature, the problem is what are we going to replace them with.

Vito: Especially as our country is small, our people are few, [this problem] is even more acute.

Chairman: Your country is small, but its presence on the world stage is not, it is impressive and you have raised high the banner of Marxism-Leninism. The Soviet Union has been controlled by revisionism. What is revisionism? It is the thought, politics, economics, and culture of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie have already seized power in the Soviet Union. Of course, we can't say that the whole organization of society has become capitalist, they haven't had enough time and there is still resistance. Since revisionism is a product of capitalism, it cannot represent the truth of Marxism-Leninism, it can only represent the minority. There is still class struggle in the Soviet Union, but it is in a critical state. If one opposes Khrushchev they will be locked up in a asylum. It is a fascist dictatorship, and worth paying attention to. Countries like ours must grasp [this concept], I cannot guarantee that in one hundred years revisionism will not appear in China.

Vito: The rare exception will arise, but given your current leadership, it won't happen.

Chairman: We will endeavor [for that to be the case].

Qibrije Ciu: Are you not in the process of using revolutionary spirit to teach the youth?

Chairman: We are using class struggle to conduct their education, to acknowledge the existence of class, the existence of class struggle, how to appropriately engage in class struggle without spilling blood and without starting a war, but there are still a small number of bad elements that must be corrected—anti-revolutionaries, bad elements, running dogs of imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek, running dogs of Khrushchev—the social situation in our country is extremely complicated, you shouldn't oversimplify how you look at these problems, and I frequently exhort foreign comrades to not oversimplify their views of China. There is a bright side, and it is of primary importance. There is also a dark side, and although it is of secondary importance we must also pay attention to it; society is comprised of both sides. There are approximately 20 to 30 million people who want to restore the landlords and capitalist class, many more than the population of your country.

Vito: You can build an army one by one.

Chairman: But they are dispersed, and among them their levels [of capitalist tendencies] are different. We have ways of making them follow the rules, and if a small number refuse, then we have ways of making them submit.

Vito: Dictatorship [of the proletariat].

Chairman: Dictatorship always has a target; you can't trust what Khrushchev says, he says that dictatorship has no target, and that the all people's party, the all people's state, they are deceptions, they don't work like that. The reason that he is raising these slogans is to conceal the fact that he is in the process of restoring the bourgeoisie, he's deceiving people. Revealing the deceptions of the all people's party and the all people's state, you should probably support this, right?

Vito: We completely agree.

Chairman: The Party only exists if you have class distinctions, if it doesn't represent this, then it represents that. You cannot have two different classes represented by the same party. The state is a tool of the dictatorship, otherwise it shouldn't be called a state. How long does it take for a dictatorship [to emerge]? It's hard to say, perhaps several hundred years. To engage in communism with everyone taking what they need, it is impossible that imperialism will not be overthrown.

Vito: There is still revisionism.

Chairman: There is still revisionism, every country's reactionary elements. Production must still reach a certain level, cultural education must still reach a certain level, all of the conditions must be met before it will be possible. We've talked too much this time, and for too long.

Vito: Thank you, you've taught us a great deal.

Chairman: We've chatted about a lot of things. Give my regards to Comrades [Enver] Hoxha, [Mehmet] Shehu, [Hysni] Kapo and the others.

Appendix: Foreign Guest Name List [\[1\]](#)

Albanian Women's Union Delegation:

1. Vito Kapo, Delegation Head, Chair of the Albanian Women's Union, Albanian Worker's Party Central Committee Member, Albanian People's Assembly (Kuvendi Popullor) Chairman Delegation Member. Wife of Albanian Worker's Party Political Bureau Committee Member Comrade Hysni Kapo.
2. Qibrije Ciu, Delegation member, Albanian Women's Union Chairman Delegation Committee Member, Vice Minister of the Albanian Ministry for Culture and Education.
3. Naunka Shqepa, Delegation member, Albanian People's Assembly Representative, President of Fier District Suiman Agriculture Manufacturing Cooperative.
4. Vita Konomi, Delegation member, Albanian "Stalin" United Textile Mill (Kombinati Tekstilit "Stalin" Tirana) Socialist Labor hero, expert in Animal Husbandry.
5. Pandora Koco, Delegation member, Albanian Women's Union chairman delegation committee member, Albanian Worker's Party Central Committee inspection member.
6. Aferdita Gambeta, Delegation member, Albanian Women's Union Chairman delegation committee member [member of the presidium of the Albanian Women's Union], New Albania Woman [Shqiptarja e re] magazine editor-in-chief.
7. Dhora Konomi, Delegation member, Chairperson of the Korçë District Women's Union.

Albanian Film Workers:

1. Sidelie Kaige (塞迪莉·凯吉), Director, Worker's Party member and notable artist (塞迪莉·凯吉).
2. Yani Nuona (亚尼·努纳), Cameraman, Worker's Party member
3. Pulianke Yakuowa (普莉安凯·亚库瓦), Composer, Delegation Head of the Shkoder Entertainment Delegation (普莉安凯·亚库瓦), notable artist (普莉安凯·亚库瓦).

[\[1\]](#) A note on Albanian names: Where an individual or a location's name is known in Albanian it is included (i.e. Vito Kapo, Korçë). Where the original Albanian name is unclear from the Chinese, pinyin is used and the name is underlined. Chinese characters are included for reference.